

GIS mapping of North American wild sheep translocations.

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Abstract: At the 10th Biennial Symposium of the Northern Wild Sheep and Goat Council (1996 in Silverthorne, Colorado), a workshop was held to exchange, verify, and update transplant records for wild sheep in 18 central and northern states, provinces, and territories, excluding desert bighorn sheep states. Biologists from state/provincial/territorial wildlife management agencies compared donor and recipient transplant records for wild sheep, as far back as records were available. Tabular summaries were included in the 10th NWSGC Proceedings. In winter 2005-06, transplant actions for each state/province were preliminarily entered into a Geographic Information System (GIS), to graphically depict inter- and intra-state/province/territory translocation of wild sheep. Individual maps were drafted for each state, province, and territory, as were composite maps for wild sheep translocations across central/northern U.S. and Canada. An interim presentation on this mapping effort was given at the 16th NWSGC Symposium in Midway, Utah, and at the 2009 Desert Bighorn Council meeting in Grand Junction, Colorado. The WAFWA Wild Sheep Working Group continues to make progress on this mapping effort. Once concluded, and inclusive of desert sheep translocations, these GIS maps/databases should provide a valuable framework and an historic record for future genetic review, population implications, possible disease analysis, and other management strategies relative to wild sheep transplants across western North America.

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